

Mr. J. L. Lovell 58

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Bent Place ~~1820~~
Jan 6 1820

Sam'l. Gummel ^{to the former}
admitted March 1820 -

Dysentery

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Dysentery.

In selecting a subject for an Inaugural Dissertation, I am not unaware of the expectations of something new; but the limits which are put to the experiments & practice of Students render it impossible for them to add any thing of importance to medical science; except, so far as relates to their making use of the remedies recommended to them by their Preceptors. They can merely state how far they have found them usefull or otherwise.

Having some opportunities of practice on patients labouring under the disease called Dysentery, I shall therefore select that disease, as the subject of my Inaugural Disputation.

Doctor Cullen says, "this is a disease in which the patient has frequent stools accompanied with much griping and followed by tenesmus. The stools, though frequent are generally in small quantity, and the matter voided is chiefly mu-

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cow, sometimes mixed with blood. At the same time the natural feces seldom appear, and when they do, it is generally in a compacted and hardened form.

This disease is common to armies and navies and places where a number of persons are kept confined, for a length of time. Though, it sometimes prevails as an epidemic, and occasionally with intermittent and remittent fevers, and it is frequently complicated with them. It is said by some to be contagious, by others not so, unless it be of the typhus type.

This disease that came under my notice prevailed as an epidemic in the neighbourhood of the Great Falls of Potowmack River, in Fairfax County, Virginia. It bore very much the bilious type.

It occurred early in July 1819 and pre-

* Generally slight

-vailed until the early part of September following.

This disease most commonly came on with chilblains and head-ache, which was succeeded by nausea, high fever, pain in the bowels, frequent mucous and bloody stools, and occasionally green and black offensive stools. After a few days, the patient discharged a quantity of matter, which appeared like white meat that had been beaten or mashed into small pieces; at other times small round balls or lumps, about the size of a hickory-nut, somewhat resembling suet. These discharges were frequently attended with and succeeded by a discharge of bloody water, not unlike the washings of fresh meat. At this time, the patient complained of great torments and tenesmus, soreness of the ~~abdomen~~ and a peculiar watch-edness.

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It was seldom necessary to repeat this remedy if used in the early stage.

It was occasionally necessary to repeat this remedy.

It very frequently took double and sometimes three times the ordinary dose to act.

Called to a patient in the early stage of this disease, I generally took from twelve to twenty-five ounces of blood, until the most prominent symptoms and distressing symptoms were relieved. This in many instances, had such a powerful effect in relieving pain, spasm, and reducing febrile action, that the patient would for a short time appear, as if his relief would be effectual; but this was not uniformly the case.

Shortly after the measurable relief of the patient by bloodletting, whether those disagreeable symptoms recurred again or not, I followed it by an emetic of Spee-vauxha and Tector Emetic in combination; with which I thoroughly evacuated the stomach. The strong impression made upon the stomach by the emetic, had a great tendency to the surface, and seemed to act as an

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anodyne to all the local affections. Though there were many patients who took two or three times the ordinary dose to act upon them. Many of whom, discharged large quantities of bile; and others chiefly phlegm, but generally, the stronger the impression upon the stomach, the greater was the relief of the local affections.

So soon as the patient's stomach was composed after the operation of the omelie, I administered a large cathartic consisting of not less than from twenty to thirty grains of Calomel; if that did not operate in a few hours, I directed the patient should take from twenty to forty grains of Rhubarb or Jalap.

The Calomel would generally operate, (it being much assisted by the Specacuanha and Tartaric mastic that had been, previously taken) this most commonly produced large diarrhoea.

ges of bile and other frequent water, which was offensive in the extreme. The relief of the patient from this operation was very considerable.

In the early part of the prevalence of this disease, after I had exhibited remedies to the extent above stated. I gave Tartar, Glauber's Salts or Seuna & Salts, all of which were so disagreeable, that there were not more than one patient in five or six, that could keep them on their stomachs, and they, generally with considerable difficulty.

To remedy this evil, I for a while made use of the jalap or Rhubarb in pills with considerable benefit; occasionally, using Opium to relieve pain; but being disatisfied with this remedy from the continuance of the disease, I determined to make use of that invaluable remedy

* Rx Opium 10 grt, Specacuanha 2 1/2 grt & Calomel 2 1/2 grt
mixed and made into two eight pills (I had
on some occasions to make use of Rhubarb or
Galap instead of the Calomel in the above
receipt) Consume pills every two or three hours.

* I generally made use of Saponin & Cola & Glauber
Salts, fresh butter &c to assist the cathartic medicine.
I have used Saponin as an only ingredient & often with considerable

or combination of medicine recommended by the Professor of the practice, which consists of a combination of Opium, Specacauana and Calomel. This acted in a threefold manner, as an anodyne, diaphoretic & cathartic.

For cold & dry, the patient may take a thin dose. The patients were generally prodded rapidly; but where the stool was too hard not been sufficient, or the doses were much more absolute than common, I found it necessary greatly to increase the quantity of Calomel in each pill; sometimes to the amount of six & eight grains (This would not generally be necessary for me to give from two to four times) This would discharge the balance of the irritating matter, and add greatly to the relief of the patient.

Soon after commencing the use of the combination, Opium, Specacauana and

In some cases, I had a foul yard and a half of flannel night around the patient and made fast with thread or pins, which was much more easy to apply, than the narrow roller, and appeared to answer nearly all its purposes.

The combustion of Specum Specocauda and Salve
was continued after the application of the roller

balome, if the symptoms were not great
or relieved. I applied a flannel roller around
the abdomen and breast, which extended
from the pubis to the armpits. The patients
frequently would in a very short time,
after the application, speak of the great
comfort that he received from it.

There were a few cases in which I was
unable to use the patient's own
flannel roller or common cloth
or stocking, it produced on the parts
to which it was applied these patients
frequently wore a cotton roller or common
cotton handkerchief around the abdomen with
considerable advantage.

The roller is bulky, great and bulky
the remedy, it removes local torpor, pain
tension, and other bad symptoms; it
gives strength to the patient and adds
greatly to his comfort. Previously to the

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application of the roller, I have heard patients complain of great pain and soreness; when they moved or turned; to use their own expressions, that "their bowels seemed to be rubbing or scraping against each other". After the application of the roller the patient could move, or turn himself without much difficulty, the affection of the bowels being somewhat relieved.

If the roller did not produce the entirely desired effect or where the patient would not suffer it to remain, I found it necessary to apply a large blister to the abdomen; from the powerfull impression, which this produced so near the seat of the disease, the patient experienced such beneficial effects, as to render his state of convalescence speedy. Consider this last remedy one of the most

and such a situation would
make people less likely to make
any progress over which it would be
impossible to remove such a
large body. Little more than a year
ago now, I was told that
a large number of
dissatisfied people
had gathered around the
house of a man named
John C. Calhoun, and
that he had been
invited to speak at a
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John C. Calhoun, and
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valuable of our science, in this disease.

I now tender you my unfeigned thanks for the advantages that I have derived from your several lectures. and conclude this unembellished statement of facts, so fully sensible of its imperfections that in submitting it, I have only to add that nothing short of the necessity imposed and the reliance that I have on the liberality and candour of the body to whose inspection it is to be subjected could have forced me to have exposed it.

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